

whether from a vocational school, a community college, or a four-year college—should open doors for students, not weigh them down with insurmountable debt.

When the program was created 50 years ago with bipartisan support, it could cover more than 75 percent of the cost of earning a four-year degree at a public university. But today, it doesn't even cover 30 percent of the cost. That's why I've fought throughout my career to increase Pell Grant funding in order to help current and future students with the rising costs of higher education.

Our investment in the Pell Grant is an investment in our children's and our nation's future. As we mark 50 years of the Pell Grant program and recognize the success of graduates who have benefitted from it, I look forward to continuing my support for the program to ensure future students have access to invaluable opportunities without being saddled with burdensome loan debt.

I urge my colleagues to support the bipartisan resolution declaring June 23, 2022, as National Pell Grant Day, as well as to work towards protecting the right for all Americans to pursue a higher education should they choose, regardless of their financial status.

RECOGNIZING DR. CHRIS
MARKWOOD

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 23, 2022

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is my honor and pleasure to extend my personal congratulations and best wishes to a gifted educator and devoted community leader, Dr. Chris Markwood, on his retirement as the President of Columbus State University (CSU). Dr. Markwood's retirement from three decades of work in higher education will be celebrated at a reception on June 23, 2022, at the Cunningham Conference Center in Columbus, Georgia.

Dr. Markwood earned a bachelor's degree in Political Science and History from Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Missouri. He then returned to his native state of Texas to earn his doctorate and a master's degree in Political Science from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Before beginning his tenure as President of Columbus State University, Dr. Markwood ascended to several distinguished higher education positions across the United States, including the inaugural Dean of the University of Central Oklahoma's College of Arts, Media & Design; interim chancellor at the University of Wisconsin-Superior; and provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

In June of 2015, Dr. Markwood joined Columbus State University as the institution's fifth president, where he implemented an ambitious plan to reconnect the university with the greater Columbus community of fostering "communiversity." During seven years of dedicated service, Dr. Markwood not only led CSU to achieve outstanding academic success but also oversaw the growth of community events such as Winter Fest, a holiday festival that brings thousands from the surrounding Columbus area to CSU's Main Campus every year

for a celebration of the many religions, cultures, and traditions that live in the hearts of the people of the Chattahoochee Valley. Dr. Markwood's philosophy of "communiversity" has certainly paid off, expanding the reach of the University into the greater Columbus area and forging bonds that have created new opportunities for students, graduates, and the businesses that serve as the economic backbone of the community. This includes CSU being among the inaugural group of University System of Georgia institutions offering the system's new nexus degree programs—designed to aid more Georgians in accessing careers in high-demand areas and to help employers identify highly qualified talent.

Under Dr. Markwood's leadership, Columbus State University has remained a mainstay in the U.S. News and World Report's ranking of regional public universities and the publication's mobility index. Other publications and websites have lauded the university's academic strengths in business, communication, nursing, and online degrees, as well as its military-friendly environment. Additionally, CSU has introduced nearly thirty new undergraduate and graduate degree offerings, a nearly equal number of new certificate programs, and modernized more than a dozen academic programs to better serve its students. This transformation was exemplified through several corporate-community-academic partnerships, such as the creation of new cybersecurity and robotics engineering programs in collaboration with TSYS, Fort Benning, and Pratt & Whitney. Moreover, under Dr. Markwood's tenure, CSU demonstrated its preeminence in the arts by launching a new film production degree in partnership with the Georgia Film Academy, and created Flat Rock Studio, a state-of-the-art film and television production campus, with support of Columbus' own W.C. Bradley. These robust community partnerships have positioned Columbus State University and its students extremely well for successful future careers in an expanding field of job opportunities.

Dr. Markwood has been honored both locally and statewide; in 2021, he received the Meritorious Public Service Medal from the Department of the Army—presented by Major Gen. Patrick Donahoe, Commanding General of the U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence and Fort Benning. He has also been included on Georgia Trend's 2022 list "100 Most Influential Georgians" which marked his sixth consecutive appearance among the handful of university presidents across the state to be included each year. Dr. Markwood currently serves as an executive committee member of the Peach Belt Conference, a member of the Georgia Council on Economic Education's Board of Trustees and the University System of Georgia's Comprehensive Administrative Review Steering Committee. He is also a longtime Rotarian and current member of the Columbus Rotary Club.

Dr. Markwood's official service at CSU will soon be coming to an end, but his dedication to helping others will continue. As a servant leader and man of faith, Dr. Markwood has shown a strong commitment to both serving students and improving the quality of life in the Chattahoochee Valley. Dr. Chris Markwood has accomplished much in his life, but none of it would have been possible without the grace of God; the love and support of his wife, Bridget, and their daughter, Reagan.

Nelson Mandela once said that "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Dr. Chris Markwood has dedicated his life's work to educating scholars who will turn their passions into thriving careers that will improve our communities and change the world.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join my wife, Vivian, and me along with the more than 730,000 residents of the Second Congressional District of Georgia in extending our sincerest appreciation and best wishes to Dr. Chris Markwood, and his family, upon the occasion of his retirement. Throughout his career, Dr. Markwood has done so much for so many for so long and we wish him the very best as he embarks upon the next chapter of his life.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PELL GRANT

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 23, 2022

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Pell Grant program.

When Congress created the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant in 1972, they did so to provide direct financial aid to working families, like my own, who faced numerous challenges in paying for college.

My parents arrived in the U.S. in pursuit of the promise of the American dream for themselves and their seven children.

When I was accepted into UC Berkeley, the question of how to pay for it loomed large over my parents and me. It took me 20 years to pay off my school loans, which I always considered an investment in myself.

However, at 17 years old, taking out student loans was terrifying. And these days, paying for college has only gotten harder. Most of the families receiving Pell Grants earn incomes of \$40,000 or less. That is why the federal Pell Grant program eases families' student loan burden and is critical to ensuring folks can pursue higher education.

My district is made of families like my own—working families trying to ensure their children have access to the economic mobility that college can provide. In the 38th district of California, a little over 15,000 students are receiving almost \$59,000,000 in Pell Grant awards. That's only a portion of the 7 million students that can attend college because of Pell Grants.

As we approach the 50-year mark on the Pell Grant program, I encourage the United States to celebrate "National Pell Grant Day" on June 23. Let us recognize the current students and successful graduates who have benefited from the program.

Madam Speaker, I hope we can count on another 50 years of bipartisan support for low-income students through the Pell Grant program. I urge my colleagues to support the bipartisan resolution declaring June 23, 2022, National Pell Grant Day this year, and in the future.